

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, April 20, 2016, to Discuss the Buddy Attick Parking Lot – Green Redesign and Gateway Signage.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Councilmember Edward V.J. Putens was detained at work and arrived at 8:43p.m. Councilmember Silke I. Pope was unable to attend due to illness.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Jessica Bellah, Community Planner; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Sharon Bradley, Bradley Site Design; Bill Orleans and others.

Buddy Attick Parking Lot – Green Redesign

Ms. Bradley reviewed the existing conditions of the Attick Park Parking Lot. She noted the need to make this area more welcoming and create a green and sustainable parking area. Ms. Bradley said the parking area currently has parking available for 92 vehicles.

Ms. Bradley presented a PowerPoint Presentation detailing two Site Plan Options. She explained that Option 1 proposes a nine (9) foot wide bioretention swale and allows for 99 parking spaces, boardwalks to protect plantings in the bioretention swale, and allows for safe pedestrian circulation. Ms. Bradley reviewed the proposed primary park entrance which will include bands of pervious paving, educational signage and an informational kiosk. She advised the secondary park entrance would be located near the current secondary entrance off the upper parking lot.

Ms. Davis asked about permit/employee parking in the proposed parking lot. Ms. Bradley said a barrier type separation of parking (similar to the existing permanent bollards) takes up considerable space so it is proposed that signage or markings be used to designate these spaces.

In response to a question from Ms. Mach, Ms. Bellah said staff would explore grant opportunities for the educational signage and informational kiosk.

Mr. Roberts mentioned that many park users enter the park from the path off Crescent Road (by the lower parking lot) and proceed into the park using the path by the Recycling Center. Ms. Bradley said she would review that entrance.

Mayor Jordan asked if the plans incorporated bicycle traffic. Ms. Bellah said no, but added that it could be further researched and developed.

Ms. Bradley said the proposed plans are for 22 foot travel lanes compared to the existing 24 foot lanes. Ms. Bellah said Public Works had been consulted on the reduction of travel lane width to be sure it would not impact its operations. She said Public Works staff has indicated the 22 foot lanes were adequate.

Ms. Bradley said Option 1 includes the removal of one row of White Pine trees off the upper parking lot area to allow for the expansion of the parking lot area. She said the second row of White Pine trees will remain. Mr. Roberts said he was opposed to the removal of these trees.

Ms. Bradley then reviewed Site Plan Option 2. She explained this Option fits the proposed parking lot into the footprint of the existing parking lot and provides 103 parking spaces, four (4) to five (5) foot bioretention swales, and does not require the removal of any existing Pine trees. She said all the other features of Option 2 were similar to Option 1.

In response to a question from Ms. Davis, Ms. Bradley said both the nine foot and four to five foot bioretention areas will handle a 1.2 inch rain event. Ms. Mach asked which size bioretention area has the greater likelihood of having problems of failing. Ms. Bellah said with good maintenance, both areas would be similar. Ms. Bradley said the wider option will provide for a more significant presence and would be easier to maintain.

Mr. Putens asked if the island separating lanes of the park entrance off Crescent Road could be straightened. Ms. Bradley and Ms. Bellah said they could look at this option but noted the location of the Pepco pole off the entrance area greatly restricts the entrance possibilities. Ms. Bradley advised the cost for the pole relocation is prohibitive.

Council asked if pavers that allowed for engraving could be considered for the main entrance area. Mr. McLaughlin said staff would look into this idea.

Mayor Jordan and Ms. Davis suggested the proposed plans be reviewed by the Advisory Planning Board (APB) and the Park and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB). Mr. McLaughlin said he would discuss this idea further with staff and determine whether it would be best to wait until plans were further into the design stage before being sent to APB and PRAB for review.

In response to a question from Mr. Putens, Ms. Bradley said she would expect the costs for Option 1 and Option 2 to be very close, but added that she was not at the point of estimating the project costs yet. She estimated construction for the entire project would take a couple months.

After further discussion, Council requested Ms. Bradley and staff incorporate a bicycle component into the proposed plans.

Gateway Signage

Ms. Bradley provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Gateway Signage Proposal. She noted that the proposal includes monument gateway signage at the entrances on Southway and on Crescent Road (by the Police Station), pole signage on Research Road at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) entrance and on Kenilworth Avenue between Westchester Park and Greenbelt Road. She said column signage is proposed in the other signage locations. Ms. Bradley said this will provide for consistency (style, message and materials) in the gateway signage project.

Mr. Roberts said he needs to know the cost of each sign type before he can make any decision on which type of sign is best for each location.

After discussion, Ms. Mach said a historic monument sign is only needed on Southway. She said a column sign is more appropriate for Crescent Road by the Police Station because the Greenbelt Lake and Boxwood area are not historic. Ms. Davis and Mr. Putens agreed. It was also suggested that a pole sign be included by the traffic light at the southbound I-95 exit ramp onto Kenilworth Avenue.

Mayor Jordan suggested banner hardware be included to allow for banner/flag type signs for Greenbelt Day and other events to be attached to the signs. Mr. Putens said he had concerns about how the banners would look.

Mr. Roberts said he doesn't think the signage project is necessary.

Ms. Bradley described the landscaping proposed for the monument sign on Southway. She said low level plantings would be used in the rear areas, and Black Eyed Susans (State flower) along with other perennial and long blooming plants would be used toward the front. Ms. Bradley said this will provide for seasonal colors.

Mayor Jordan said he would prefer to start the signage project in an area other than Southway. Ms. Davis and Ms. Mach said they thought the monument signage on Southway would be a good starting point.

After discussion, Council requested Ms. Bradley proceed with costing out the project and submit a proposal for one monument sign, three pole signs and seven column signs in the areas proposed.

There was discussion regarding the bus stop on Southway by the entrance sign. Mayor Jordan and Mr. Herling indicated the bus stop does not get much use. Mr. Orleans, Greenbelt, disagreed and said that the stop is widely used.

Informational Items

Ms. Davis reported that she had been appointed to the Maryland 21st Century School Commission.

There was discussion regarding the flag bearer for the Maryland Municipal League Convention's Parade of Flags. It was suggested that Mayor Jordan be registered as the flag bearer, with Mr. Herling as the alternate.

The meeting ended at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*